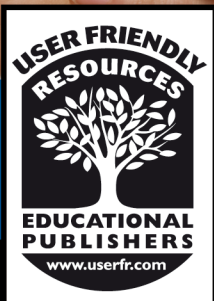
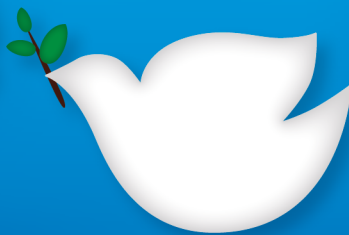


KEEP COOL!

Strategies for Managing Anger at School



Paula Galey

Title

Book Name: Keep Cool: Strategies for Managing Anger at School
Book Code: 660
ISBN 13: 978-1-86968-572-0
Published: 2009

Author

Paula Galey

Acknowledgements

The publisher wishes to acknowledge the work of the following people:

Design & Illustration: Cynthia Packman
Editor: Ben Allan and Pauline Scanlan

The poem on p.13 Autobiography in Five Short Chapters has been reproduced with permission.
©Copyright 1993 by Portia Nelson from the book *There's a Hole in my Sidewalk*. Beyond Words Publishing, Hillsboro, Oregon, USA.

PUBLISHER

User Friendly Resources

New Zealand

PO Box 1820
Christchurch
Tel: 0508-500-393
Fax: 0508-500-399

Australia

PO Box 914
Mascot
NSW 2020
Tel: 1800-553-890
Fax: 1800-553-891

United Kingdom

Premier House
11 Marlborough Place
Brighton, East Sussex
BN1 1UB
Tel: 0845-450-7502
Fax: 0845-688-0199

WEBSITE

www.userfr.com

E-MAIL

info@userfr.com

COPYING NOTICE

This is a photocopiable book and permission is given to schools, preschools or teachers who buy this resource to make photocopies or transparencies of all pages. The copies must be for internal school use only, and may not be given or sold to other educational institutions or teachers from other institutions.

COPYRIGHT

User Friendly Resources, 2009.



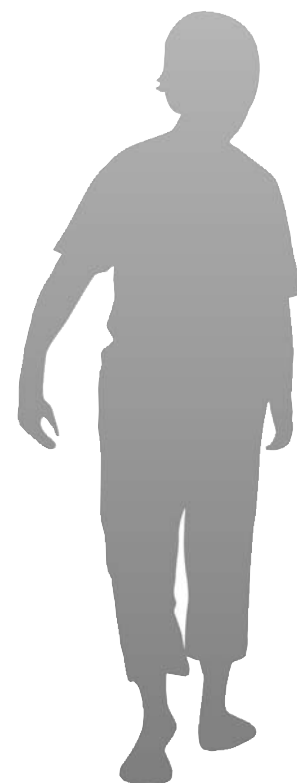
User Friendly Resources specialises in publishing educational resources for teachers and students across a wide range of curriculum areas at early childhood, primary and secondary levels. If you wish to know more about our resources, or if you think your resource ideas have publishing potential, please contact us at the above address.

Contents

KEEP COOL!
Strategies for managing anger at school



INTRODUCTION	4
About Anger	5
About the Stress Sheet	7
The Stress Sheet	8
The Anger Control Game	9
The Sweet Game	10
1. WHERE DOES MY ANGER COME FROM?	11
Teacher Ideas Page	11
Autobiography in Five Short Chapters	13
Heard About Habits?	14
Relating to Rules	15
Accent on Anger Rules	16
Help! I Need Help!	17
2. I'M BOILING OVER	18
Teacher Ideas Page	18
Boiling Over	21
Anger Scenarios	22
Gone Fishing	23
Excess Baggage	24
Putting it in Perspective	25
Angering Others	26
3. FOCUS ON THE PHYSICAL	27
Teacher Ideas Page	27
Focus on Feelings	30
Listen to the Legs	31
Cool, Calm, and Collected	32
Wicked Words	33
4. FOCUS ON THOUGHTS	34
Teacher Ideas Page	34
Mad Thoughts and Glad Thoughts	37
Considering the Consequences	38
Tools of the Trade	39
5. POWERFUL WORDS	40
Teacher Ideas Page	40
Wise Words	43
Puzzling on Problems	44
Now for Negotiation	45
6. EVALUATION	46
Teacher Ideas Page	46
Coaching the Coach	47
Rewarding the Rage Ref	48
7. THE TIME OUT RESOURCES	49
Teacher Ideas Page	49
The Time Out Process	51
Ideas for the Time Out Space	52
Time Out Pass Holders	53
Time Out Users' Log	54
Time Out Pass	55
Time Out Procedure	56
8. REVIEWING AND CONSOLIDATION	57
Teacher Ideas Page	57
A Last Look at the Learning	58
Decisions of Destiny	61
Deciding on the Door	62
Takeaway Tools	63
Graduation Certificate	64





Keep Cool! has been developed to assist teachers and others who are working with students who respond to conflict or challenges with inappropriate levels of anger or with aggressive behaviour.

The resource provides teachers with guidance and frameworks that focus on skills and strategies that will allow students to respond to challenging situations in ways that are acceptable to others. Students will learn to understand what triggers their anger and also to understand that they can make choices about how to respond when they feel angry.

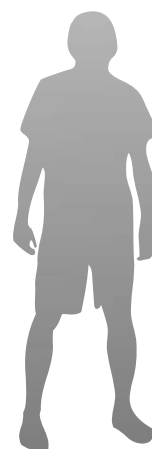
The strategies students learn will help them to pay attention to the physiological and psychological processes they undergo at the point of becoming angry and sets out practical skills they can implement to calm themselves down. Additionally, students will develop an understanding of the difference between expressions of 'good' anger and expressions of 'bad' anger.

When students are able to respond to their feelings of anger with a wide range of strategies, they will feel a sense of personal power and be able to exercise greater self-control.

Using this Resource

The material in this resource can be used:

- with all students as part of the health curriculum
- by specialist staff such as guidance counsellors and behaviour support workers on an individual basis with at-risk students
- in peer-tutoring schemes using senior students in life skills classes with at-risk junior students
- with small groups of at-risk students working with a teacher aide
- by parents or caregivers working with their children individually in the home.



Resource Structure

The resource is divided into eight sections. Each (aside from the separate **Time Out** resources section) has been developed to take about one hour to complete. It is a good idea for users to aim to work through the sections in order, as the process is structured developmentally. However, teachers should also feel free to use the material more flexibly to align it with the learning needs of their students.

Each section begins with teacher guidelines, supported by student activity sheets. Sessions should ideally begin with a rapport building activity followed by a review of previous learning.

A separate section contains resources that can be used to establish a **Time Out** process for those times when classroom anger may become disruptive or is expressed in an otherwise unacceptable manner.



Most teachers find themselves needing to deal with the issue of anger in the classroom at some time or another. This initial section summarises some current thinking about what anger is, how it can manifest itself – both positively and negatively – and what it means for the students you work with.

What is anger?

Anger is an emotion, not a behaviour. It's a particular kind of response to an external trigger. Like all responses, we're all triggered by different things.

Common anger triggers can be:

- feeling hurt
- feeling betrayed
- feeling frustrated
- feeling insecure
- feeling afraid
- feeling wronged
- feeling a sense of injustice
- feeling powerless
- feeling embarrassed
- feeling jealous.

Similarly the depth and range of the anger felt will manifest itself as different behaviours in different people. Some people become silent, while others become enraged enough to hit out. There is almost always a physical manifestation of anger, even if it is stored away (sometimes for years).

Anger is not a bad thing. It is a physiologically important emotion which can motivate us into action. For example, if we see someone mistreating an animal, our anger will motivate us into trying to stop the mistreatment. Many great social movements have been generated through mass anger against perceived injustices.

Problems with anger almost always arise when people use the feelings of drive and energy which are triggered in ways that engender negative consequences. This is where anger management comes into play. Managing anger means consciously recognising that you are angry and then deciding how you will deal with the energy. Good anger management involves using the energy to fuel some type of action that will resolve the problem or diffuse the emotion without violating the rights of others.

When we are angry our repertoire of responses can be defined by many things including:

- how old we are
- how we've seen others deal with anger as we grew up
- the threshold of our endurance
- whether we've been shown ways that we can deal with anger
- whether we are under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- how we've dealt with anger in the past and whether it worked.



Anger at School

A healthy school environment is one where students feel safe. Their sense of safety will come from many things:

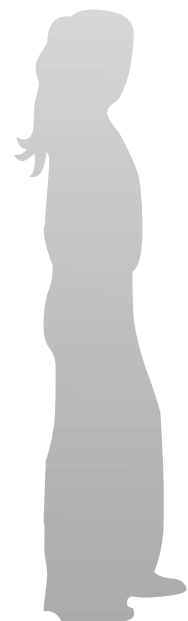
- knowing how members of the school community are expected to behave towards each other
- knowing what the boundaries of individual behaviour are
- knowing that all people in the school community are cared for and respected
- knowing that there is zero tolerance for bullying, hitting out and put-downs
- knowing that the school has a range of frameworks in place that allow people to deal with their anger, including: time out, counselling, conflict resolution, or other interventions.

If you look back at the anger triggers you'll see that schools must be minefields in terms of potential for angry feelings! Although the incidents that trigger anger are likely to be different for a six-year-old ("I don't want to do the cross country!") and a sixteen-year-old ("I deserved an A for that essay!"), the feeling beneath the anger will be the same – "I feel threatened or powerless." We might expect sixteen-year-olds to have better ways of dealing with their feelings than six-year-olds, but this will only happen if they have *learned* strategies for dealing with it.

Teacher Modelling

If you get angry in class (and most of us do) and manifest your anger in negative ways like shouting uncontrollably at individuals, storming around and so on, it will be pretty difficult to deliver an anger management programme with credibility. So look at yourself first and how you deal with conflict and crisis. How you manage these things yourself will provide the most significant example to your students of alternative ways of expressing your frustration or displeasure at a situation. Showing that you can keep cool under pressure demonstrates what self-control is all about. You'll send the message, "It may look like a crisis, but by staying cool I'll be in a better position to solve the problem." Use "I" messages to show your annoyance. They'll soon get the message.

This is particularly important for students who have not seen this kind of approach to dealing with feelings of anger modelled at home. Research shows that family background can play a role in how easily children are angered. Typically, angry children come from families that are disruptive, chaotic and not skilled at emotional communication. It's important too when all of our children are bombarded with media images of angry people solving problems by shooting each other.



About the Stress Sheet



The Stress Sheet is an important part of this resource. It has been designed to help students learn the skills of assessing their own behaviour and monitoring their own progress over how they manage their anger. It presents a structured 'non-judgemental' framework for students to reflect on how they handled their anger in a given situation. The log should be used at every session where anger is the focus.

Many students will also benefit from keeping a journal in which they paste their Stress Sheet over a negotiated period of time, perhaps a month or two.

The Stress Sheet should be seen as a platform for learning. If students record negative experiences about their anger, it is an opportunity to address what happened and to plan for a different outcome next time.

Starting off each session

- Begin each session on anger in the same way. Ask students to think about the most recent thing that happened to make them feel angry.
- Individuals can spend a quiet few minutes completing the Stress Sheet about this incident.
- Those who want to tell the group their most recent 'angry' stories can do so. Use this opportunity to focus on what they did, how they think they handled the situation and what they could have done differently. Focus too on drawing out what the consequences of their actions were / might be.
- For students to feel confident telling their stories, aim for this to be an open forum where judgements aren't made. Use questions like:
 - What did you do then?
 - How did you feel?
 - Why do you think you felt like that?
 - How might the other person have felt? etc...
 - What could you have done differently?

Emphasise the need for confidentiality, "What's said within this room stays within this room."

Discussions can be led by the teacher at first, modelling questions – later other students can take on this facilitating role. Build up confidence in students role-playing other people's 'angry' stories and see if they are able to come up with alternative outcomes for each other.



The Stress Sheet

NAME _____

DATE _____

This is what happened

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Someone teased me | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone took my things |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Someone ordered me about | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone started a fight with me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Someone did something I don't like | <input type="checkbox"/> I did something wrong |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

This is when it happened

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class time | <input type="checkbox"/> After school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before school | <input type="checkbox"/> Playtime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch time | <input type="checkbox"/> At home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

This is how angry I felt

- ☐ Burning
 ☐ Really angry
 ☐ Angry
 ☐ Quite angry
 ☐ Annoyed

This is who made me angry

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff member | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> Stranger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone else | |

This is what I did

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hit back | <input type="checkbox"/> Compromised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kicked | <input type="checkbox"/> Talked about it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yelled | <input type="checkbox"/> Ignored it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swore | <input type="checkbox"/> Told someone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Argued | <input type="checkbox"/> Thought of the consequences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cried | <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ran away | <input type="checkbox"/> Took time out |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hid somewhere | <input type="checkbox"/> Asserted myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged property | <input type="checkbox"/> Got help |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Went silent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Got revenge | <input type="checkbox"/> Calmed down |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

This is how I handled the situation

- ☐ Very well
 ☐ Well
 ☐ OK
 ☐ Badly
 ☐ Very badly

The outcome of the situation was...

This is what I would do differently next time...

The Anger Control Game

(AKA The Sweet Game)

KEEP COOL!
INTRODUCTION



TEACHER PAGE

Information for Teachers

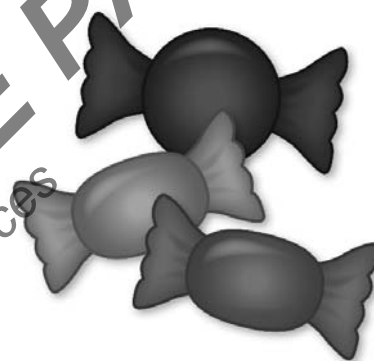
This is a good starter activity. But be warned... students will get angry! The game students will play here is designed to be unfair. Its purpose is to get people talking about anger and how they felt during the game. The situation is controlled, but make sure that you read through the rules carefully before you begin playing the game. Try playing it with some colleagues first so that you get the idea.

Number of Players

3 – 15

Resources

- A copy of the rules for each person
- Two identical packs of cards
- Pair of dice
- Bowl
- Bag of individually wrapped sweets – enough for 5 each



IMPORTANT SETTING UP NOTE:

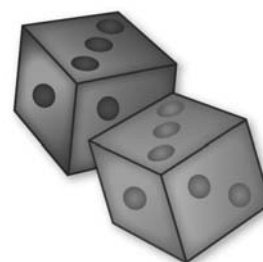
Before you start, secretly remove two hearts from one of the packs of cards. Replace the hearts with two cards of a different suit from the spare pack so that you still have 52. Make sure that you mix the remaining hearts so that they are more towards the top of the pack. Decide how long you want the game to be; this might be a time limit, or when a certain number of players have been eliminated, or when the bowl has a certain number of sweets in it. At the end of the game you will select the person who has shown the best sportspersonship (you), and you will take all the sweets out of the bowl for yourself.

Don't tell them that this is called the Anger Control Game! At least not until you've explained what you've been doing. Call it the Sweet Game!

FOLLOW-UP

After you've played this infuriating game, you will have a group of annoyed students who will complain about the game's unfairness. Use this focus and energy to discuss these questions. Make sure you set up this part so that people are not calling out.

1. Did you enjoy this game? Why or why not?
2. How are you feeling right now, especially physically?
3. What do you think is causing you to feel like this?
4. What other kinds of things can make you feel this way?
5. What different sorts of actions can you take when you are faced with situations that make you feel angry?





How to Play

1. Players sit in a circle and each person has 5 sweets. You are not allowed to eat the sweets.
2. Put the bowl in the middle of the table.
3. Everyone must have a copy of the rules next to them.
4. Decide who will start the game.
5. When it's your turn you can choose between rolling the dice or choosing a card.

Dice

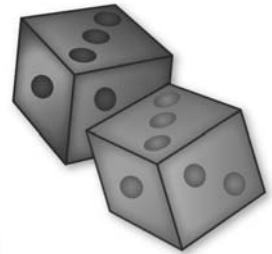
If you choose to roll the dice – add the two numbers together.

If the number is:

ODD – put a sweet in the bowl.

EVEN – take a sweet from anyone else's pile.

If a **DOUBLE** is thrown (you don't add these together) give anyone playing one of your sweets.



Cards

If you choose to draw a card and you get a:

SPADE – you must give a sweet to the person on your right.

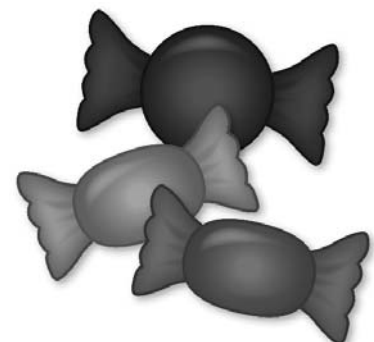
CLUB – you must give a sweet to the person on your left.

DIAMOND – you must put a sweet in the bowl.

HEART – you get two sweets from the bowl (or from a person of your choice if the bowl is empty.)



6. If you lose all your sweets you are out of the game.
7. You can get back in the game if someone gives you a sweet after one of their turns.
8. At the end of the game the person with the most sweets wins, and everyone else may keep any sweets they have won.
9. Your teacher will decide who displayed the best sportsmanship during the game – and this person gets any remaining sweets from the bowl.



Where Does My Anger Come From?



Key Ideas

What's good about anger? What's bad about anger? Can we change our behaviours? Why does how we behave matter?

Habits

Let's Talk About Habits

Use the Portia Nelson poem ***Autobiography in Five Short Chapters*** (p.13) with students. It illustrates how people can fall into the same pattern of behaviour even though they know the end result will be bad. Talk about habits that they have. What good habits do people have? (Brushing teeth, etc.) What bad habits do they have? (Biting nails.) Where do habits come from? How are habits broken? Do they have any *behaviours* that are 'habits'? (Like sulking if they lose a game.)

Talk about how breaking a habit, especially if it's a bad one, takes:

- **Self-awareness** (of the habit)
- **Conscience** (knowing what's good/bad, right/wrong, how it affects others)
- **Imagination** (seeing alternatives and choices)
- **Will power** (consciously deciding to change, actually changing and sticking to the change)

Ask someone to volunteer a 'bad habit' that they think they have. See if students can discuss how to apply these qualities to help the person to change the habit. Move onto the activity sheet ***Heard About Habits*** (p.14)

Rules

Let's Talk About Rules

Talk about why we have rules in society. What society rules (laws) can they think of? What school rules can they think of? What rules do they have at home? Have rules been invented to stop people having fun? Discuss how, on the whole, we live life harmoniously because we follow rules which make our lives safer and easier. If there were no school rules... what do you think it might be like here? What other rules can they think of (church, friends' houses, youth club etc.) Use the ***Relating to Rules*** sheet (p.15) to focus on these ideas.



Behaviour

Let's Talk About Behaviour Rules

Some of the school or class rules you know are probably related to how people are expected to behave towards each other. These rules are usually based on one idea – that we should treat others in the way we ourselves would like to be treated. Sometimes, if we get angry, we forget about this central rule. Expressions of anger commonly impinge on the rights of others. Discuss how. The sheet **Accent on Anger Rules** (p.16) has been designed to pin up in the classroom as a memory jogger about what our 'anger rules' are. It's also appropriate for students to add to this list to make into a poster of their own.

Talk about the kinds of things people could do when they are feeling angry that are OK.

Use the **Help! I Need Help!** page (p.17) for students to draft a response to someone whose seeking advice on how to manage their anger.

Note: Activities further on in this resource will give students more ideas to add.

Discuss the spelling point that taking the **D** away from **Danger** leaves **Anger**.

